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INFO IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 070826

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST: INSTRUCTIONS TO LOBBY GOI ON
FUNDING FOR UNAMI COMPOUND

REF: A. KUJAWINSKI-PHEE EMAIL 06-17-08
[B](#). STATE 46440
[C](#). BAGHDAD 1425

[1](#). (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraphs 2 and 5.

OBJECTIVE

[2](#). (SBU) Embassy Baghdad is requested to again lobby the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to obtain a substantial GOI contribution for the funding of the proposed new United Nations compound in Baghdad. Embassy is asked to coordinate its demarche, as needed, with the UK Embassy in Baghdad. UNAMI will demarche the GOI separately, as a follow-on to the U.S., or US-UK, demarche.

BACKGROUND

[3](#). (SBU) On June 15, 2008 the Deputy Secretary of the Council of Ministers, Ali Hassan Ismail, wrote to UNAMI to confirm that 40,000 square meters of land due west of the al-Sujud Palace, within the International Zone, had been dedicated by the GOI for use by the UN, for the duration of 25 years. The UN is planning to build a secure compound for the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) on this dedicated plot of land. Embassy Baghdad has endorsed this location and plan (Ref A).

[4](#). (U) Although the allocation of this land is a step in the right direction, UN Member States may be resistant to approving the compound's construction without a substantial GOI contribution to its funding. Earlier indications from the GOI suggested that an Iraqi contribution of up to \$100 million could be available (Ref B). (Comment: That was on the basis of an earlier assessment that a new compound would cost approximately \$200 million. End comment.) Although the compound is now expected to cost only \$98.6 million, Member States will expect an Iraqi contribution, with some expressing the hope that this would cover 50 percent of the total cost. We suspect 50 percent is too high an amount to expect the Iraqis to provide, but we would like them to make a contribution in the tens of millions of dollars.

TALKING POINTS

[5](#). (U) In speaking to the MFA, Post may draw on the following points:

-- UNAMI's presence in Iraq benefits the GOI and the people of Iraq. It continues to play a key role in addressing issues such as internally disputed boundaries, elections, humanitarian assistance, refugee returns, and national reconciliation.

-- In order to operate more effectively, the UN has made clear that new premises are necessary to accommodate

additional staff and undertake additional activities, all in accordance with its expanded mandate under UNSCR 1770. We support this and understand the GOI and the UN have agreed upon a suitable location. We welcome this step forward.

-- However, agreement for the construction of the compound must still be obtained from UN member states. The ACABQ (UN budget committee) will first receive a briefing by a UNAMI representative and make a recommendation on funding.

-- This recommendation will then be considered by the 5th Committee of the UN, which includes all Member States and operates by consensus. The 5th Committee will decide whether to approve the construction. Whatever percentage of the total construction cost is not paid for by the GOI must be paid for out of the assessed contributions of all UN Member States; therefore, the more money the Iraqis contribute, the less money UN Member States will need to contribute, and the more likely they will be to approve the construction.

-- There is ample precedent for a country like Iraq to contribute substantially to UN operations on its territory. For instance, Kuwait paid for two-thirds of the operating costs of the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) from November 1993 until the completion of the Mission in 2003, with the remainder paid for by assessed contributions of Member States. The total cost of UNIKOM from its inception

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in 1991 until 2003 was approximately \$600 million. In addition, Cyprus currently funds one-third of the cost of maintaining the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), and Greece contributed an additional \$6.5 million to the total budget of \$48.1 million from July 2007 to June 2008.

-- We believe it is important for the GOI to confirm in writing that it is willing to make a significant contribution. This should be done in advance of the next ACABQ meeting, which has not yet been scheduled.

-- A significant GOI contribution will increase the likelihood of getting UN approval for the compound,s construction and may increase goodwill towards Iraq at the UN on issues of concern to Iraq, such as the DFI.

REPORTING DEADLINE

16. (U) Embassy should report results of efforts in a cable by Thursday, July 10.

POINTS OF CONTACT

17. (U) Please contact Josh Davis in NEA/I at (202) 647-8169 or via email at DavisJR@state.gov and/or Bridget Lines in IO/UNP at (202) 647-7142 or LinesBM@state.gov for any further background information.

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